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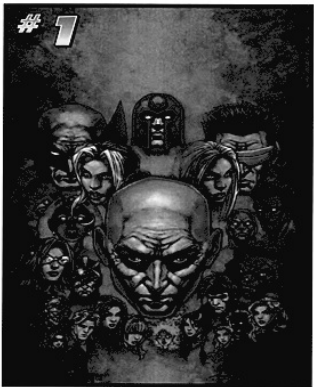
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HE'S BACK!

EXCALIBUR

"FORGING THE SWORD"

PREVIOUSLY



PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, founder of the mutant super hero team known as the **X-MEN**, has left the **X-Men** and his New York home for the island nation of **GENOSHA** following the death of his onetime friend and frequent enemy, **MAGNETO**. Once a prosperous, technologically advanced country populated almost entirely by mutants, **Genosha** was recently decimated—along with all 16 million mutants who called it home. Its destroyer was none other than **Cassandra Nova**—Xavier's twin sister. Now, it is nothing but rubble and a few refugees who hide among its ruins.

Xavier finds that not everybody on **Genosha** is happy he's there—for instance, **UNUS THE UNTOUCHABLE** and his gang, who threaten him. But to his defense come two young mutants—**WICKED** and **FREAKSHOW**. Xavier learns he has both friends and enemies on **Genosha**.

When Xavier reaches his dwelling, he is greeted by his new housemate, a man the entire world believes to be dead...

Excalibur (ISSN #1550-0748) No. 2, August, 2004. Published Monthly by MARVEL COMICS, a division of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 10 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. © 2004 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand. Canadian Agreement #45066337. Printed in the USA. Subscription rate (U.S. dollars) for 12 issues: U.S. \$37.00 Canada \$37.00 Foreign \$59.00 POSTMASTER: SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO EXCALIBUR, C/O MARVEL, SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 32 NEWBURGH, NY 10551. TELEPHONE # (800) 217-8154. FAX # (845) 546-7020. subscriptions@marvel.com. ALLEN LIPSON, Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel. ART ADAM, Chief Creative Officer. GUY KAWYD, President of Publishing and C.O. DAVID BOGART, Managing Editor. STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Russell Brown, Executive Vice President, Consumer Products, Promotions and Media Sales at rbrown@marvel.com or 212-516-6551.

HAMMER BAY,
GENOSHA.

A FEW SHORT YEARS
AGO, HAMMER BAY WAS
RATED ONE OF THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL AND LIVABLE
CITIES ON EARTH.



TO WALK ITS STREETS WAS TO
BE TRANSPORTED HEADLONG
INTO THE FUTURE.

I SUPPOSE, IN THAT
SENSE, NOTHING
HAS CHANGED.

MERELY THE
KIND OF FUTURE
IT REPRESENTS.

I GOTTA STOP.
WICKED.

WHASSAMATTA.
FREAKSHOW.
SOMETHING YOU
ATE?

DON'T
MAKE
FUN. IT
HURTS!

IT'LL
PASS.

THIS IS
YOUR LAST
WARNING!

RETURN TO
SHORE OR WE
WILL OPEN
FIRE!

WE JUST
WANT TO
CATCH SOME
FOOD!

OUR
PEOPLE ARE
STARVING!

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

BY CHRIS CLAREMONT
AND AARON LOPRESTI



Greg Adams Inker, Liquid Colors Tom Orzechowski Letterer
Stephanie Moore & Cory Godin Color Assistants Editors Mike Harris Editor Joe Quesada Editor in Chief Dan Buckley Publisher



UNUTH
CAN'T LEAD.

REALITY
CHECK, TOAD--
FREAKSHOW
SWALLOWED
HIM WHOLE!

UNUS HAS
POWERS, MAN.
AIN'T NOthin'
CAN HURT
HIM!



HE'LL BE BACK!
AND THEN WHAT?

WE TAKE
HIM BACK AS
OUR
LEADER?



QUEEN'S
ROOK PAWN TO
PAWN FOUR.

THAT'S...
UNCONVENTIONAL,
CHARLES.

OR
DO YOU
JUST NOT
CARE?



YOU KNOW
ME BETTER
THAN THAT,
ERIK.

I ALWAYS
PLAY TO
WIN.



I'M SORRY
I COULDN'T HAVE
BROUGHT MORE
SUPPLIES.

BUT THIS IS
THE LIMIT OF
WHAT I COULD
SAFELY
SMUGGLE IN.



I'VE ALWAYS BEEN
IMPRESSED BY YOUR
RESOURCEFULNESS.

I WASN'T
ALWAYS A
TEACHER.

WE BOTH
HAVE
SHADOWS
ON OUR
SOULS.



ANY
IDEA WHO
THIS IS IN
THE
COFFIN?

Nok!



WELL...
SUPPOSEDLY
YOU.

AH. WELL.
HOW...
CONVENIENT.



YOUR IMPOSTER TOLD ME
HIS SECONDARY MUTATION
WAS TO ALWAYS COME BACK
FROM THE DEAD.

HMPH.
PREVIOUSLY THE
HIGH-EXCLUSIVE
PROVINCE OF MS.
JEAN GREY.

WHOEVER
HE WAS,
HE KILLED
JEAN.

JUST
FOR
SPITE.

I--I
DIDN'T
KNOW.





YOU'VE BEEN PRONE TO THE
HEADACHES EVER SINCE I
CAN REMEMBER.

EVER
SINCE I CAN
REMEMBER,
TOO.

OR AT
LEAST SINCE
MY POWER OVER
MAGNETISM
BECAME
ACTIVE.



DON'T
GO THERE,
CHARLES.





IT'S JUST
HOW CAN YOU
WIELD THE
ENERGIES YOU DO,
ON THE SCALE
YOU DO...



...WITHOUT
AN EQUIVALENT
COST TO THE
BODY?



YOU'D THINK
NATURE WOULD
HAVE TAKEN
THAT INTO
CONSIDERATION
WHEN SHE
DESIGNED US.

UNLESS WE
TRULY ARE AN
EVOLUTIONARY
WORK-IN-
PROGRESS.



"HOMO SAPIENS
NOT-QUITE
SUPERIOR"?

THAT'S A
BIT CRUEL,
EVEN FOR
HER.



IT MIGHT
EXPLAIN THE
SUDDEN
PREVALENCE
OF SO-CALLED
"SECONDARY"
MUTATIONS.



DON'T
YOU
THINK?



BUT IS THE MUTANT
GENOME TRULY
SO FLUID,
CHARLES?



I
DIDN'T
THINK
SO.

BUT THEN, I
NEVER IMAGINED
THAT SO MANY
MUTANTS WOULD
MANIFEST
SO QUICKLY.



IT'S LIKE WE
JUMPED A SCORE
OF EVOLUTIONARY
GENERATIONS IN
AS MANY
MONTHS.

CHARLES,
YOU'RE
SUPPOSED
TO BE THE
EXPERT.

I'M ONLY
HUMAN.



CONTRARY
TO POPULAR
BELIEF, SO
AM I.



YOU'RE DYING TO
ASK THE QUESTION.
AREN'T YOU?



WHAT'S THE POINT?
YOU DON'T HAVE THE
ANSWER.



READING MY
MIND, ARE
YOU?



READING YOUR
BODY.

PEOPLE
CAME HERE
TO GENOSHA
BECAUSE I
CALLED
THEM,
CHARLES.



THIS COUNTRY
WAS BUILT ON
THE BACKS OF
GENETICALLY-
ENGINEERED
MUTANT
SLAVES.

THE GREAT
POWERS OF THE
WORLD KNEW THAT.
YET THEY DID
NOTHING.

BECAUSE
THEY NEEDED
THE GOODS AND
SERVICES AND
TECHNOLOGY
THAT GENOSHA
PROVIDED...

...AND
THEY WERE
AFRAID OF THE
CONSEQUENCES
OF ANY
CONFRONTATION
IF THOSE SLAVES
COULD BE RE-
CONFIGURED AS
WARRIORS.

I TOOK MY
REPUTATION AS A
MONSTER AND BLACK-
MAILED THE UNITED
NATIONS INTO GIVING
THIS BLIGHTED LAND
TO ME.



I HOPED
TO BUILD
SOMETHING
LASTING
SOMETHING
OF VALUE.



I WANTED
TO MAKE MY
CHILDREN
PROUD.

THEN
A REAL
MONSTER
FELL
FROM THE
SKY AND
TURNED MY
DREAM TO
ASHES.





I COULDN'T STOP THE SENTINELS, CHARLES. I COULD NOT SAVE MY PEOPLE. DEATH WAS A MERCY.

I WAS THE ONLY ONE TO WAKE UP.

DOES IT MATTER HOW I SURVIVED?

THE PAST CANNOT BE CHANGED. MY FRIEND, ONLY THE PRESENT AND OUR FUTURE LIE WITHIN OUR HANDS.

MAKES ME WONDER, AND NOT IN A GOOD WAY, ABOUT WHAT'S WAITING IN THE WINGS.

HERE ON GENOSHA, OLD FRIEND, WE HAVE MORE PRESSING CONCERNS.

SUCH AS HOW TO SUSTAIN THE PRECIOUS FEW OF US TO HAVE SURVIVED.

WE NEED FOOD, WE NEED SHELTER, WE NEED MEDICAL SUPPLIES--OR AT LEAST A MUTANT WITH HEALING POWERS.

MOST OF ALL, WE NEED HOPE!

AND ONCE YOU GOT ALL THAT, SPORT, WHAT THEN?

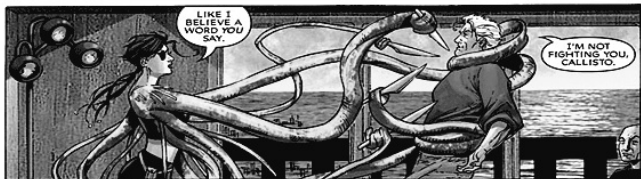
CRASH!



CALLISTO?!

WHAT'S
THE DEAL HERE,
CHARLEY?

YOU AN'
MAGNETO HAVE
THIS LITTLE CAPER
PLANNED FROM
THE START OR ARE
YOU JUST
IMPROVISING?





CALLISTO HAS A CONSIDERABLE NATURAL RESISTANCE TO TELEPATHY, ENHANCED BY MY OWN TRAINING.

BLESS MY SOUL!

I CAN'T USE MY MENTAL POWERS TO STOP HER.

FORTUNATELY, I DON'T HAVE TO.



THIS IS WICKED'S DOING.

WE MET EARLIER TODAY, A YOUNG GIRL WHO CAN MANIFEST THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD AND DRAW STRENGTH FROM THEM.

AND CONSIDERING HOW MANY DIED ON GENOSHA, THAT'S A PHENOMENAL RESERVOIR OF POWER.

HOWEVER, CALLISTO'S MARTIAL ABILITIES ARE UNSURPASSED.



WHILE SHE CAN (RARELY) BE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE...



UNFORTUNATELY, WITH EVERY
BATTLE COMES THE RISK OF
COLLATERAL DAMAGE.

AND OF
CASUALTIES.



OH, FOR
HEAVEN'S
SAKE!

YOU'RE
JUST A
KID!

LEMME
GUESS,
THOSE ECTO-
THINGS
BELONG TO
YOU, YEAM?
SOME KIND
OF EMPATHIC
LINKAGE?

I CUT THEM--AND
YOU, LUCKY GIRL, GET TO
FEEL THEIR PAIN.



I SWEAR,
CHUCKY, IF YOU
BROUGHT HER
INTO THIS--!

TAKE YOUR
HANDS OFF
WICKED!







THIS IS UNUS, WHO CALLS
HIMSELF THE UNTOUCHABLE

HE POSSESSES A
NATURAL FORCE FIELD
THAT PROTECTS HIM
FROM ANY HARM.

BUT HE'S JUST
DISCOVERED THAT'S
NOT ALWAYS AS
GREAT AN ASSET AS
IT SOUNDS.

THAT THIS
UNFORTUNATE
EXPERIENCE WAS
ENTIRELY HIS OWN
FAULT, OF COURSE.
DOESN'T ENTER
INTO IT AT ALL.

YOU'LL
PAY
FOR THIS,
KID!

I'M REALLY SORRY,
MR. UNUSCIONE.

DON'T YOU
COME NEAR ME,
FREAKSHOW!

BUT
EVERYTHING
HAPPENED SO
FAST--!

XAVIER--
KEEP YOUR
PET FREAK ON
A LEASH!

OR I WON'T
BE RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE
CONSEQUENCES!

THANK
YOU FOR THE
WARNING,
UNUS.





ONCE MORE, THAT
FLUID MUTANT
GENOME.

CERTAINLY
MAKES YOU
WONDER.



WICKED.
THAT'S--THAT'S
MAGNETO!

THEY
SAID HE WAS
DEAD!

AS FAR
AS I'M
CONCERNED,
HE SHOULD
BE!



AND
WHY IS
THAT,
CHILD?

LOOK
AROUND
YOU!
HAVEN'T
YOU GOT
EYES TO
SEE?!

THIS
WAS YOUR
COUNTRY! WE
WERE YOUR
PEOPLE! HOW
COULD YOU
LET US BE
DESTROYED?!



FOR WHAT IT'S
WORTH, WICKED,
YOU HAVE MY
WORD--

--I
WON'T LET
IT HAPPEN
AGAIN.



A GOOD
BEGINNING,
MY OLD
FRIEND.

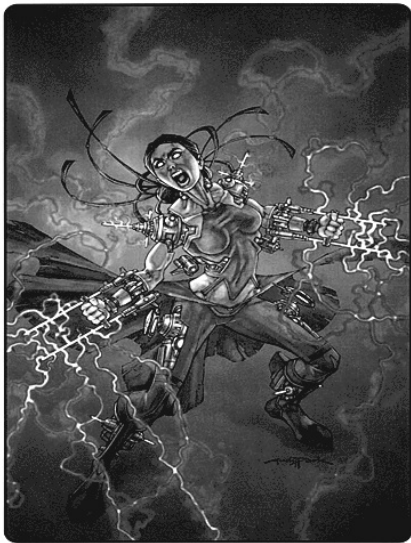
BUT WHAT IS
MORE IMPORTANT IS
THAT, TOGETHER...

...WE CAN
TRY TO BUILD
SOMETHING
BETTER.





SWORD STROKES



EXCALIBUR #3
"FORGING THE SWORD" Part 3 of 4
ON SALE NEXT MONTH!

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NEXT ISSUE:

**ENTER THE
OMEGA
SENTINEL!**

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